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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine if a parent workshop on reading strategies would increase students' use of reading strategies and improve both parent's and child's attitudes toward reading at home. Fourteen parents from an affluent suburban first grade attended. The parents represented students from below average to above average reading ability. The parents answered a questionnaire before and three weeks after the one-hour reading strategies workshop. Raw data was converted to means and standard deviation and analyzed using t tests. The difference between the means was statistically not significant. Parents did report many more strategies than were previously known. (Contains 22 references and 4 tables of data. Appendixes contain a letter to parents, the parent survey, and 10 handouts given at the workshop.) (Author/RS)

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The Influence of Parent Awareness of Successful Reading Strategies and the Impact on Children's Reading Behavior and Attitude

By

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine if a parent workshop on reading strategies would increase student's use of reading strategies and improve both parent and child's attitudes toward reading at home. Fourteen parents from an affluent suburban first grade attended. The parents represented students from below average to above average reading ability. The parents answered a questionnaire before and after the one-hour reading strategies workshop. Raw data was converted to means and standard deviation and analyzed using t tests. The difference between the means was statistically not significant.

This research was conducted during my graduate studies at Kean University, New Jersey. My sincerest gratitude is dedicated to my husband whose support and encouragement were unwavering. Many heartfelt thanks for my mother whose inspiration as a dedicated and caring teacher was the impetus for my love of teaching and learning.

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The family has a powerful impact on children's literacy development. Researchers and educators have advertised the notion "of the critical nature of literacy experiences at home and about the value of parental involvement in children's school experiences…(Morrow, Tracy, Maxwell 1995). Although reading and writing abilities continue to develop throughout the life span, the early childhood years-from birth through age eight-are the most important period for literacy development" (Joint Position Statement IRA and NAEYC 1998).

Considering the developmental nature of the primary grade child, young readers need support and trained guidance when reading to decode and comprehend. Specifically, this approach mandates explicit instruction, which addresses the application of the three language cueing systems; semantic/meaning system, syntactic/language system, and graphophonic/letter-sound relationship system (Fisher 1995). In a study conducted by Arlene Baumgart (1998) analysis of data revealed that students become strong readers by coordinating multiple reading strategies to improve their memory and understanding of text.

Reinforcement at home of beginning reading strategies taught in school help to support the emerging reader's development toward independence. It is essential, then, for schools to provide materials and information for at-home literacy activities that complement the schools instruction in reading strategies. Further research indicates that, "the more help a child receives from his or her parents, and the more they are prepared to help their child, the better the child's reading achievement (Nebor 1986).

Information promotes understanding and improvement. Positive at-home reading experiences that support the developing reader will aid in fostering lifelong readers.

In order to add to the body of information already available, Granfield and Smith (1995) hypothesized that parental workshops served as an effective tool for increasing the quality of parent/child reading interactions and improve attitudes toward reading at home. Following a parent workshop on reading strategies, results indicated that:

1. Parent frustration levels when helping children read decreased after the workshop.
2. Children spent less time requiring assistance from their parents, thus reading more often on their own.
3. All parents used the reading strategies taught during the workshop.
4. Parents reported that their children's attitudes toward reading were better after the workshop.

Hypothesis

Based on the above, it would appear that replications of these findings in other areas would be of value to encourage widespread use. For the purposes of this study, it was hypothesized that a strategy-based parent workshop will increase students' use of reading strategies due to reinforcement at home and school. Parent and child's attitudes toward reading at home will also be improved due to knowledge of specific strategies to use at home to decode and respond to text and increased independence of the young reader.

Procedures

Participants in the study included fourteen parents and students from an affluent suburban elementary school. The students' reading abilities ranged from below average to above average. Parents were selected to attend a one-hour workshop by invitation.

Five days prior to the workshop:

Parents were given Questionnaire I in regard to:

a. Level of comfort/frustration when reading with child

b. Strategies used when helping their child read at home

c. Strategies their child uses when reading new words

At the one hour workshop:

Information packets were distributed and explained regarding the following:

Stages of reading development: emerging through early fluency

Specific reading strategies children can use when reading

How to select a book that is appropriate for each child's reading level

Comprehension techniques known as "Think aloud" and "Making Connections"

Three weeks after the workshop:

Parents were given Questionnaire II in regard to:

a. Level of comfort/frustration when reading with child since the workshop

b. Strategies used when helping their child read at home

c. Strategies their child uses when reading new words

Results

Parent frustration levels when helping their child read were low both before and after the workshop.

Table I
Comparison of Questionnaire Responses Before and After the Reading Workshop

Question	Always		Frequently		Sometimes		Never	
	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
My child sees reading as enjoyment.	7	10	3	4	4	0		
My child initiates reading at home.	4	7	5	5	4	2	1	
My child has a good attitude about reading.	8	8	2	4	3	2	1	

My child enjoys being read to by family members.	10	14	3	0	1	0			
My child enjoys reading to family members.	4	7	5	6	5	1			
My child likes to get books from the library or as gifts.	9	14	4	0	1	0			
I have a good sense of my child's reading level/abilities.	6	8	4	6	4	0			
I feel comfortable with helping my child find appropriate books for his/her reading level.	6	5	6	7	2	0			
My child understands most of what he/she reads.	5	7	8	9	1	0			
My child can provide a summary of stories read.	5	7	7	6	2	1			
My child and I talk about the story after the book is read.	2	6	11	7	1	0			
My child and I talk about the story while the book is read.	3	0	8	4	3	4			
My child becomes frustrated when trying to read an unknown word.	1	0	3	3	5	7	5	4	
I become frustrated when helping my child read.	0	0	0	0	6	5	8	9	
My child sometimes guesses at words, but they usually make sense.	1	1	4	7	8	5	1	1	
When my child is "stuck" on a word, she/he will most often:	*Ask for the word* 5	2	*Guess* 3	4	*Try to figure it out* 1	8			

Table II
Conversion of Table I to assess statistical significance

A point value was assigned to each response category then multiplied by each raw score in order to calculate mean, standard deviation, and t values.

Question	Always=4		Frequently=3		Sometimes=2		Never=0	
	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
My child sees reading as enjoyment.	28	40	9	12	8	0		
My child initiates reading at home.	16	28	15	15	8	4	1	
My child has a good attitude about reading.	32	32	6	12	6	4	1	
My child enjoys being read to by family members.	40	56	9	0	2	0		
My child enjoys reading to family members.	16	28	15	18	10	2		
My child likes to get books from the library or as gifts.	36	56	12	0	2	0		
I have a good sense of my child's reading level/abilities.	24	32	12	18	8	0		
I feel comfortable with helping my child find appropriate books for his/her reading level.	24	20	18	21	4	0		
My child understands most of what he/she reads.	20	28	24	27	2	0		
My child can provide a summary of stories read.	20	28	21	18	4	1		
My child and I talk about the story after the book is read.	8	24	33	21	2	0		
My child and I talk about the story while the book is read.	12	0	24	12	6	8		
My child becomes frustrated when trying to read an unknown word.	4	0	9	9	10	14	5	4
I become frustrated when helping my child read.	0	0	0	0	12	10	8	9
My child sometimes guesses at words, but they usually make sense.	4	4	12	21	16	10	1	1

As can be seen in Table III, there was a mean difference of 3. between parent responses before and after the workshop.

Table III
Means, Standard Deviations and t of the Sample's Pre and Post Scores

Sample	M	SD	t
Before	39.53	11.29	.59
After	42.27	14.10	

NS
This difference was statistically not significant

It was reported that they were either "sometimes" or "never" frustrated. No one reported to be frustrated "always" or "frequently". Therefore, significant change in frustration levels after the workshop did not result. Before the workshop, the majority of parents believed that their children had a good attitude "always" (8 responses) or "frequently" (2 responses) toward reading. After the workshop, 4 parents reported that their child "frequently" has a good attitude about reading compared to 2 parents before the workshop.

The most significant change after the workshop was time spent discussing the book while it was being read. Before the workshop, 12 parents reported they engage in conversation during storybook reading. After the workshop, no one reported to discuss the story while it was being read despite the information given at the workshop.

A slight change was noted in children's use of reading strategies as seen in Table IV.

Table IV
Comparison of reported use of reading strategies before and after the workshop

What strategies do you know that can help your child read an unknown word?		What strategies do you know that can help your child read an unknown word?	
Before		After	
# of responses	**Strategy**	**# of responses**	**Strategy**
10	Sound it out	11	Find known words within word
4	Picture clues	6	Ask if it makes sense/context
4	Ask if it makes sense/context	4	Look for word families
2	Use the dictionary	3	Use picture clues\
2	Tell the vowel sound	2	Read with the rest of the sentence
2	Wait	2	Reread the sentence
2	Break the word into smaller parts	2	Sound it out
2	Find known words within word	2	Give the word
2	Think of rhyming words	1	Ask if it sounds right?
1	Guess	1	Use the dictionary
1	Reread the sentence		
1	Give the word		
1	Explain the meaning of the word		

After the workshop, three more parents noticed that when their child will guess at a word, it frequently makes sense. Also, three more parents reported that their child would either guess or try to figure out the word instead of asking for the word. After the workshop, a greater percentage of parents reported using the strategy of "finding known words within larger words" (11 responses) as opposed to using the strategy of "sounding it out" (2 responses). Before the workshop was given, a majority of the responses favored "sounding out" as a strategy (10 responses). After the reading strategies workshop was given, more parents reported using the strategies discussed at the

workshop. A greater percentage of parents (eight more) reported using the strategy of "finding known words within larger words".

Conclusions

The majority of parents believed that their children had good attitudes toward reading and that they both had low levels of frustration. This positive response may be due in part to the time of year (mid first grade) and involvement of parents. By mid-first grade most students are able to read primer books or higher.

At this time of the year, many students are beginning to apply various reading strategies on their own in order to create meaning. In contrast to the beginning of first grade, the process of decoding is more prominent than reading for meaning. If the workshop and surveys were given in September or October, frustration levels and attitude may be different compared to the middle of the year.

The parents of the particular school studied are active in having contact with the teacher. Parents call school each week to listen to the teacher's voice mail and are kept up to date with class activities and techniques used in the classroom. Book club purchases are made each month by many parents for their children. It is evident that the parents value literacy.

The workshop did, however, provide information in assisting parents with additional strategies when reading with their child. Parents were able to report many more strategies than was previously known. By having a better understanding of the many reading strategies, parents can reinforce what is taught in school.

Implications

Parental involvement is crucial in promoting a child's academic success and attitude toward learning. When instructional language is consistent between school and home, children benefit. Parent workshops are an effective way in ensuring open communication between educators and parents. Workshops on reading strategies would be especially beneficial if given early in the year for first grade.

Related Research:
The Effects of Parent Involvement on Children's Reading Achievement and Attitude

There is mounting societal pressure to improve literacy in America. In President Clinton's State of the Union Address (February 1997) he stated a literacy goal: "every 8-year old must be able to read" (Fry, 1998, p. 366). Educators and parents share in the responsibility to promote literate citizens. Parents and educators must work collaboratively to ensure a child's academic success. "The increase in public awareness about the role of the family in children's literacy development underscores the growing prominence of family literacy in our culture" (Morrow, Tracey, and Maxwell, 1995, p.4). By communicating with parents regarding curriculum and specific techniques used in the classroom, children benefit from repeated exposure to terms and strategies used in school and at home (Granfield and Smith, 1995). Research of early readers concludes that, "parental beliefs, aspirations, and actions critically affect children's literacy growth" (Routman as cited in Nistler and Maiers, 2000, p. 670).

Parental influence, as defined by Nebor (1986), is "any opinion, attitude, or action that the parent does or implies that somehow shapes or molds the child's attitudes toward reading" (p.3). Young children look to their parents as role models and mimic actions and language. Consequently, the earlier positive parental input occurs the greater impact it will have on a child's literacy growth. Parental influence is a significant factor in shaping a child's beliefs about reading. Nebor (1986) notes that parents should use their influence to its greatest degree and demonstrate by word and action that reading is important. The effects of parental influence are emphasized by Riout (cited in Chesney, 1995) who attests that when parents read sparingly to children and infrequently listen to them read aloud, "the children become poor readers" (p.4). Davies and Brember (1995)

contend, "children's understanding of the purposes for learning to read, including enjoyment, is fundamental to their attitudes to adult participation" (p. 309).

One of the most important facets of developing lifelong readers is a positive attitude. Kennedy and Halinski (cited in White 1989) purport that a student's positive attitude toward reading must become apparent before the goal of lifelong readers is realized. Alexander and Filler (1976); Wilson, Robeck, and Michael (1969) define "attitude" as a "learned predisposition to react in a consistent, emotionally toned way toward a particular person, idea, or thing. Attitudes related to reading consist of a system of feelings toward reading related to print which causes the learner to approach or avoid a reading situation" (cited in White, 1989, p.20). Positive attitudes toward reading must be fostered for students to realize its value for both informative and recreational purposes. Link (1984) stated that "a child's attitude toward reading affects his reading interests, and reading interests affect the child's reading habits" (cited in White, 1989, p.13).

In a study conducted by Chapman and Tunmer (1995) data revealed a high correlation (p .05) between perceptions toward reading and attitudes toward reading in Grade one. However, children who encounter early reading difficulties develop negative attitudes, which in turn affect the amount of time given to practice reading. Positive reading attitudes continue to decline throughout the upper grades. "Uncorrected problems in reading become established patterns of difficulty and poor performance, children's perceptions of competence come into line with actual achievement" (Chapman and Tunmer, 1995, p.165).

Hall (1978) found a significant difference (p .05) between attitudes of varying ability readers. High achievers had more positive attitudes than middle or low achievers.

Middle achievers had more positive attitudes than low achievers (cited in White, 1989). White (1989) confirms, "reading attitudes are closely related to achievement scores"(p.27). Data taken from a review of 110 research studies of student attitudes toward reading between 1900 and 1977 (Davis, 1978) shows that attitudes become more positive with increased reading achievement (cited in White).

Parental influence on a child's reading behavior includes belief systems as well as direct involvement while reading. Nebor (1986) defines parental involvement as "any direct tutorial help the child receives with his or her reading work" (p. 3). In a study conducted by Shuttleworth (cited in Nebor, 1986) a significant increase in reading progress was achieved when children were tutored by their parents. He found that 50% of the eighteen children made "significant gains once the tutorial process began" (p.9). The adult's role as a supporter when a child reads in order to provide feedback and interaction with text is essential to building a child's competence and confidence in reading (Davies and Brember, 1995).

Numerous studies have confirmed the hypothesis that parental involvement positively affects their child's reading achievement. A study conducted by Dumrong Adunyarittigun (1997) investigated the effects of a parent-tutoring program upon elementary grade students' motivation to read and self-perception as a reader. Results indicated that by the completion of the reading assistance, the students were more motivated to read, had more confidence in their reading ability, and voluntarily engaged in literacy activities. Overett and Donald (1998) studied the effectiveness of a paired reading parent involvement program in a South African school of fourth graders. The research aimed to investigate whether reading accuracy, comprehension, and attitude

were promoted through a process of paired reading. Results indicated an improvement in reading accuracy, comprehension, and attitude of the students involved in the program.

Davies and Brember (1995) conducted a study that measured students' reading habits and attitudes. The distribution results showed that 60% of the students believed they did most of their reading at home. With a significant percentage of students reading at home, it is essential for parents to have the skills necessary to help their child when reading. One of the most important goals of a teacher should be to assist parents in understanding how children become better readers and writers. A useful way of conveying this message is parental workshops. "Parent workshops are designed to provide in-depth information to parents about the school's curriculum and their children's learning through first-hand experience and to provide practical suggestions that parents may use at home..."(Enz, 1995, p.170). Studies indicate (Silvern, 1985) that parents will more readily value reading activities at home if the benefits and procedures are clearly explained (cited in Granfield and Smith, 1995).

When teachers explicitly explain the strategies to use and benefits of parental assistance, student achievement will increase. Bates (1986) randomly assigned fourteen children to two groups. Each group received parental tutoring and was counseled as to how to tutor in reading. At the end of the study, the children whose parents had training made greater reading achievements (cited in Nebor, 1986). Roundtree (1993) supports this notion by stating that parents need to have a complete understanding of their child's school program and they need to be trained to directly assist in their child's education (cited in Granfield and Smith, 1995). In a study by Leach and Siddall (1990) the effect of parental involvement in a child's reading when given specific instructional strategies

was measured. The study involved 40 parents of first grade students. The results suggested that "increases in rates of reading progress could be expected when parents were taught more precise instructional methods that go beyond the provision of increased opportunities to practice reading at home (cited in Granfield and Smith, 1995, p.22).

Lesley Mandel Morrow and John Young (1997) designed a Family Literacy Program in order to measure the effects of a literacy program on increasing children's achievement and motivation to read and write, as well as gauge parents' and teacher's attitudes about literacy development. The program included an explanation to parents regarding specific materials and activities to complete with children at home, monthly group meeting for parents with a mentor, and log to record the activities engaged in at home. The participants in the study included children from first, second, and third grade in an urban public school district. The 28 children in the control group received a school-based literacy program only. The other 28 children received a family literacy program. The family literacy program included the same elements as the school-based literacy program, which would also be applied at home. The elements included:

1.Parents read to and with their child. Conversations took place regarding the stories read.

2. Parents told stories to children and were given materials for dramatic expression (storyboards, puppets). Materials were available for the children to create their own stories.

3. Parents and children wrote in journals together.

4. Parents helped their children keep a file box of "Very Own Words" to review and apply in writing.

5.The Highlights for children magazine was sent home with a notebook that included lessons for using the magazine. Another copy of the magazine remained in school.

6. Parents visited the school to work with their children in literacy center time at school.

At the end of the school year, results of the family literacy program were as follows:

Literacy Involvement and Motivation or Interest: The control group scored better than the experimental group in measures of story retelling ($p<.001$), story rewriting ($p<.001$), probed comprehension ($p<.001$), teacher rating of reading and writing ability/reading and writing interest ($p<.00$ and $p<.001$).
On the California Test of Basic Skills, the experimental group did not outperform the control group ($p<.07$).

After-School Activities and Family Involvement: The experimental group reported that they read more books than the control group ($p<.02$); had someone read to them more often ($p<.002$); and did someone with a grownup more often ($p<.02$).
Interview Data: The experimental group reported positive attitudes toward activities done at home.

Despite some problems with the program, the results indicated that teachers found that "many of their students were beginning to show greater interest in reading and writing and that some were also improving in their literacy skills" (Morrow and Young, 1997, p. 741).

Burgess (1982) cites the work of Bronfenbrenner (1974), Karnes (1970), and Adkins (1971) and reports programs that which emphasize parent-child communication rather than programs directed toward the child alone have produced more significant results in terms of achievement. Burgess (1982) studied the effects of a training program for parents of preschoolers on the children's school readiness. Thirty parents of preschool children from a town in Maine were included in three groups: parents who

received a training program before their child was tested, parents who received a training program after their child was tested and parents who did not receive training but whose children were tested. Eight two-hour sessions were given on the following topics: reading to children, stimulating oral language, teaching spatial concepts, visual discrimination and visual memory, rhyming and auditory memory, basic readiness concepts, and relating oral language with the printed word. After the completion of all eight workshops, all ninety children were administered the Utah test of Language Development and four subtests of the Metropolitan Readiness Test, Level 1. Results indicted that the experimental group scored significantly higher than the control group in the Metropolitan Test and The Utah Test of Language Development. Burgess (1982) referred to other research that has indicated many programs that focus on the child alone have short- term gains. "However, there is some evidence that programs emphasizing parent-child interaction in the home have had later impact on the child in the school setting" (p.316).

A program called Talk to a Literacy Learner TTALL) was developed to incorporate the main tenants of essential home-school partnerships. Its main objectives were to focus on parents and the strategies that they use to interact with their children. TTALL aimed to achieve long term potential for literacy growth (Cairney and Munsie, 1993). The project was completed in three stages over a period of three years:

Stage 1: Involved teaching parents how to interact with their children in literacy activities, apply literacy strategies, and make better use of community literacy resources.
Stage 2: Involved additional workshops for parents in stage 1 who were interested in working as school or community tutors.
Stage 3: Involved selected parents from stage 2 to introduce TTALL strategies to other parents and children.

25 parents and 34 children from a suburban Sydney elementary school and preschool in took part in the program. 75 students were randomly selected as control subjects. Testing methods included field notes, videotaping, interviews, reflective journals, test of reading attitudes, and pre and post-test information (ACER Primary Survey comprehension tests, ACER Primary Survey vocabulary, and ACER spelling). The results of Phase 1 indicated that the program had a strong influence on parent/child relationships, parent and child attitudes toward literacy, and literacy performance. The impact was evidenced in nine major ways: The program had an impact upon the way parents interact with their children.

1. The program offered parents strategies they did not use before
2. The program helped parents choose resource material and book selection more effectively
3. Parents gained new knowledge about how their children learn
4. The participating families reported clearer understanding of parent roles with homework, and school activities.
5. Parents began to share their insights with other people.
6. Parents gained a better understanding of schools
7. Parents grew in confidence and self esteem in relation to helping their children and themselves with academics.
8. An impact on children's reading behaviors was confirmed: children were more confident readers and writers, they selected a greater variety of work, read more often, and found school work less difficult.
9. Analysis of the standardized tests and attitude test confirmed significant performance gains for students of TTALL parents compared to the control group. (Cairney and Munsie, 1993, p.5-6)

"All indications suggest that the more help a child receives from his parent, and the more prepared that parent is able to help his child, the better that child will do with regard to reading achievement" (Nebor,1986, p.11).

According to Clay (1990) a teacher's goal in reading instruction is to produce in the student a set of behaviors, which will ensure a "self-improving" system. With a set of self-monitoring reading strategies, the more a child reads, the more independent he/she

becomes (cited in Baumgart, 1998, p.4). Dunkeld and Dunbar (1983) note that a student's progress in reading development is closely linked to reading strategy acquisition (cited in Baumgart). The reading strategies must become automatic. In order to help the developing reader, the strategies must be reinforced when decoding and comprehending text. Therefore, to accomplish that goal, young readers must read on a daily basis. Consequently, the more success a child encounters when reading, the better his/her attitude will be toward the reading process. The home-school connection will provide the opportunity for continual practice. Parents can be taught the three-cueing systems and the prompts that can be used to help their child read.

Lancy and Bergin (1992) studied the types of parent-child interaction during storybook reading as well as the specific interaction patterns in association with children's fluency and affect. Thirty-two white, working class parent-child pairs were observed for 30-40 minutes while reading to each other. Four variables were studied:

Parent's error correction tactics: It was found that the most common error correction tactic was telling the child the word. Early, fluent readers had parents who encouraged semantic rather than decoding tactics to read unknown words ($p=.06$). Conversely, late, non-fluent readers tended to have parents who relied on decoding tactics more than semantic strategies ($p=.126$).

Commentary on the books: Parents made more comments than the children. The most common commentary for children was humor. The least frequent commentary was text introduction.

Child's asking of questions about the book: The majority of children (2/3) asked no questions or had questions go unanswered. Only 1/3 of the children had questions

answered and elaborated on in an encouraging manner. Fluency level was associated with how parents responded to children's questions. The majority of children (9 of 12) who were encouraged to ask questions were in the highest fluency groups. Children (5 of 6) who were not encouraged to ask questions were in the lower fluency groups.

Purpose for reading: Neither group read for meaning. Children read to "have fun" or to "just get through it." Parents viewed child-reading time as a way for the child to "have fun" or to practice reading skills. Parents that emphasized reading for fun had children who were more positive about reading ($p=.08$).

Lancy and Bergin (1992) concluded that the following are associated with fluency and positive affect:

1. the way parents corrected reading errors
2. parents' purpose for reading and reading style
3. the way parents responded to questions
4. number of comments made by the child (p.19)

Lancy and Bergin's study highlights the variation in parent interactions with beginning readers and stresses the need for teachers to communicate and clearly explain specific reading strategies and the benefits of such assistance.

Children's reading attainments are of central concern to both educators and society at large. Parents play a crucial role in their child's development as a reader. Parental attitudes and involvement impact their child's continued success in reading. Educators must appreciate the importance of family literacy and clearly communicate effective strategies that will ensure each child's growth as a reader. Davies and Brember (1995) adequately state, "the role of the teacher and parent in creating a lifelong interest in reading …is vital and dependent on the quality and breadth of provision, as well as the quality of the interaction between adult and child during oral reading sessions" (p. 312).

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Appendix H

January 8

Dear Parents,

I am currently studying for my Masters in Reading Specialization at Kean University. My research is primarily focused on the literacy development of young readers and the impact of parental involvement on children's reading achievement.

The early years of reading development are critical to a child's reading achievement. Beginning and developing readers require support and trained guidance when reading to decode and comprehend. Reinforcement at home of reading strategies taught in school will help support the young reader's journey toward independence.

You are invited to attend a parent workshop to learn the reading strategies for decoding and comprehension that are taught in school. I will present the workshop on Thursday, January 18th at 7:00 –8:15 p.m. in our classroom.

Integral to my study is parent feedback and response. I am in need of volunteers to answer two surveys (one survey will be given a week before the workshop and another survey will be given three weeks after the workshop) regarding reading experiences at home with your child. Your attendance at the workshop and survey feedback will provide the information necessary to research the impact of parent workshops on children's use of reading strategies and achievement.

Thank you for your valuable time and consideration. Refreshments will be served! I look forward to seeing you on January 18th!

Sincerely,

Cheryl Frank

Cheryl Frank

*Please complete the bottom slip and return it to school by Friday, January 12.

☐ Yes, I am interested in attending a workshop on reading strategies, but choose not to complete survey questions.

☐ Yes, I am interested in attending a workshop on reading strategies and completing survey questions. I understand that the surveys will be anonymous.

Child's Name:_____

Parent's Name:_____

Number of parents attending: _____

Appendix B

Parent Survey

Please indicate your observation of your child's reading at home.

A= *Always*
F= *Frequently*
S= *Sometimes*
N= *Never*

1. My child sees reading as enjoyment, not a chore. **A F S N**
2. My child initiates reading at home. **A F S N**
3. My child has a good attitude about reading. **A F S N**
4. My child enjoys **being read to** by family members. **A F S N**
5. My child enjoys **reading to** family members. **A F S N**
6. My child likes to get books from the library or as gifts. **A F S N**
7. I have a good sense of my child's reading level/abilities. **A F S N**
8. I feel comfortable with helping my child find appropriate books for his/her reading level. **A F S N**
9. My child understands most of what he/she reads. **A F S N**
10. My child can provide a summary of stories read. **A F S N**
11. My child and I talk about the story *after* the book is read. **A F S N**
12. My child and I talk about the story *while* the book is read. **A F S N**
13. My child becomes frustrated when trying to read an unknown word. **A F S N**
14. I become frustrated when helping my child read. **A F S N**
15. My child sometimes guesses at words, but they usually make sense. **A F S N**
16. When my child is "stuck" on a word, she/he will <u>most often</u>: (Circle one)
    <u>Ask me for the word</u> <u>Guess</u> <u>Try to figure it out</u>
17. When your child comes to a word he/she does not know, how do you respond?

18. What strategies do you know that can help your child read an unknown word?

Appendix C

Reflections as an Adult Reader

*How did you go about choosing this book to read?

*In what environments do you find yourself reading this book?

*What effects do these environments have on your reading?

*Did you preview the book before you began to read? How? Did it help in any way?

*How is your background knowledge affecting your reading of this book?

*How do you know if you aren't comprehending? What do you do?

*How are you handling any vocabulary that you don't know?

*How do you find yourself adjusting fluency to read this book?

*Have you found yourself doing any talking or writing about this book? How has that affected your comprehension?

Appendix D

THE STAGES OF CHILDREN'S READING DEVELOPMENT

There are three broad stages of reading development: emergent, early and fluency.

Emergent - Making a Start

The emergent reader has to learn "that a book is a special way of telling a story that lets the reader go back to it as often as he likes, that the words stay the same, that the pictures help the reader to understand the story, that the story has a shape and the author a voice."

In addition to this, by the end of this stage, the reader should:

* Show interest in attempting to read the text unaided.
* Be able to consider what is read together with what is already known.
* Be able to discuss what is happening and what is likely to happen.
* Recognise a number of words in various contexts.

Pre-school experiences of books and print are extended at school as favorite books are revised and new ones introduced and shared.

Early - Becoming a Reader

This stage is critical in making sure that the habit of reading for meaning has been established. Children are encouraged to draw out meaning from text by becoming confident in:

* Using their background experience.
* Taking risks and making approximations.
* Using the text and illustrations to sample, predict, and confirm.
* Using letter-sound associations to confirm predictions.
* Using their knowledge of print conventions.
* Rerunning and reading on when they have lost the meaning.
* Self-correcting.
* Integrating strategies in a self-improving system.

Fluency - Going it Alone

What has been developed in the emergent and early stages is built on as the children increase in confidence and competence. The emphasis at this stage is on:

* Integrating cues.
* Reducing to a minimum attention to print detail.
* Maintaining meaning through longer and more complex sentence structures, various kinds of prose, and poetry.
* Adjusting the rate of reading to the purpose.

Adapted from: Reading in Junior Classes. (1985). NY: Richard Owen Publishing.

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Appendix E

Prompts to Support the Use of Strategies

To support the reader's use of all sources of information:

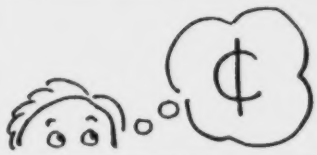
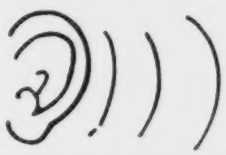
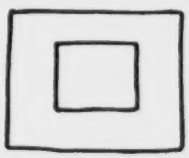
*Does that make sense?
*Does that look right?
*Does that sound right?

You said (…). Can we say it that way?
You said (…). Does that make sense?
What's wrong with this? (repeat what child said)
Try that again and think what would make sense.
Try that again and think what would sound right.
Do you know a word like that?
Do you know a word that starts/ends with those letters?
What could you try?
Do you know a word that ends with those letters?
What do you know that might help?
What can you do to help yourself?

To support the reader's use of self-monitoring or checking behavior:

Were you right?
Where's the tricky word?
What did you notice? (after hesitation or stop)
What's wrong?
Why did you stop?
What letter would you expect to see at the beginning/end?
Would ____ fit there?
Would ____make sense?
It could be ____, but look at ____.
Check it. Does it look right and sound right to you?
Try that again.

Reading Strategies

	Does it make sense?
	Look for key clues.
	Does it sound right?
	Look for little words in big words.
	Search for what you Know: word families, blends, endings
	Backtrack and read again.

Appendix G

What if they get stuck on a word?

* Don't make too much of it.
* Ask them what the word might be.
* Give them time to think and let them give it a try.
* Ask if it makes sense and sounds right.
* Then ask them to check by looking at the word again, especially the first letter.
* If they still don't know tell them by asking, "Could it be...?"
* Then ask them to read that part again - or read it yourself.

PRAISE GOOD ATTEMPTS — GOOD STRATEGIES

You can see in this short example that as Alec (6 1/2) is reading, he is noticing errors and trying to correct them himself with good strategies.

1) The book says, "I like fish for dinner"

2) Alec reads, "I like fish for lunch..." He stops. He says, *"No. It can't be lunch. It doesn't begin with D (letter name) d (sound) d- in - - oh, dinner."*

3) Alec went back and re-read the page correctly.

His teacher said, *"I liked the way you knew you were wrong and worked it out. It was a good idea to go back and read that part again."*

Alec's miscue - or error - made sense but he **cross-checked** the possible meaning with the first letter. He could see a mis-match and corrected himself.

These are very significant reading strategies that should be encouraged. You want them to **predict** what an unknown word is likely to be thus showing **understanding and making sense** of what they are reading and to use the letters in the word to confirm, or change, their prediction and, if necessary to work it out. If the words they suggest don't make sense, their choices may tell you that they **don't understand** what they are reading. **TALK** about what they are reading so they understand the story or text. **GO ON READING.** Never lose sight of the **overall purpose of reading.** It is not just to say words. It is to **ENJOY AND UNDERSTAND** the text being read.

Some mistakes 'fit' the reading and tell you that the child is making sense of what he/she is reading.

Some mistakes make no sense and warn you that the child is not making sense of what he/she is reading.

Here is an example of six-year-old Lesley reading.

"One day Duck was in the farmyard looking for something to eat! She swam out on the pool" (instead of **POND**).

Lesley is getting along well with learning to read. This kind of mistake -- or miscue -- (**pond** for **pool**) could be ignored in order to maintain fluency and meaning.

7 year old John's reading errors are more serious.

"Once upon a time there was a King who
LIVED bananas (instead of LOVED bananas)
He LIVED bananas so much that he..."

and

7 year old Stephen reading

"All PLANETS have seeds (instead of **PLANTS**)
so that new **PLANETS** can grow from them."

Ask the child if what he has read makes sense. Ask him to read it again. **Wait...**

He may well correct his own error. You may ask him to look closely at the similarities and differences between **lived** and **loved** or **plants** and **planets.** Suggest he return to the beginning of the sentence and re-read. Then go on reading.

Appendix H

Making the Most Out of Reading to Your Child

- Establish a regular reading time with your child.
- Enjoy the books you read and let the enjoyment show.
- Match the pace and the style to the listener.
- Encourage your child's involvement with stories by talking about them
- Introduce a variety of books.
- Let your children make some choices for storytime.
- Have fun!

Appendix I

What is a "just right" book?

A "just right" book is a book that your child can read independently; books should be neither too difficult nor too easy in order for your child to grow as a reader.

The "five finger rule" is one way for your child to choose a "just right book".

Once your child has chosen a book, ask him or her to read the first page aloud. As your child reads, he/she should count on one hand any unknown words. If there are five or more unknown words on a full page of text, this book is too difficult!

When reading a "just right book":

*reading should be fairly fluent (not too choppy sounding)
*your child should be able to tell you about what he/she has read
*your child should be interested in the topic.

If your child chooses a book that is too difficult, this would be a great choice for reading together! Reading aloud to your child is valuable at any grade level!

Appendix J

Focus Questions

1. Questions which draw upon knowledge (Remembering)
   who?, what?, when?, where?

2. Questions which support comprehension (Understanding)
   what is meant by?
   can you describe?
   what is the difference?
   what is the main idea?

3. Questions that require application (Solving)
   who would you choose?
   what would happen if...?
   how would you...?
   do you know someone like...?

4. Questions which encourage analysis (Reasoning)
   why...?
   what if...?
   what was the purpose...?

5. Questions that invite synthesis (Creating)
   how could we/you...?
   what if...?
   do you suppose that...?
   I wonder how...?

6. Questions which promote evaluation (Judging)
   which is better...?
   would you agree that...?
   would it be better if...?
   what is your opinion...?
   were (they you we) right to...?

Adapted from Asking Better Questions (available from The Wright Group) ©1995 The Wright Group

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Appendix K

"Think Aloud"

Children's "book talk" could include comments about...

*authors/illustrators
*book awards
*language-visual features of print, word meanings
*predictions/
*characters, story structure, intrepretation of events
*opinions
*fiction/reality
*humorous events
*character dialogue
**Connections to self, other books, world

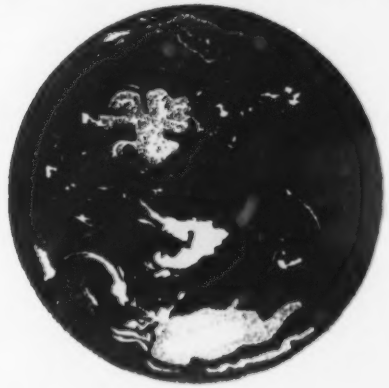
Appendix L

Making Connections

Book to Self

Book to Book

Book to World



Relate what you are reading to personal experiences, other books you have read, current events, history, or general knowledge you have about the world.